

82-1315

16 May 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Don I. Wortman
Deputy Director for Administration

THROUGH:

[REDACTED]
Chief, Psychiatric Division
Office of Medical Services

[REDACTED]
Director of Medical Services

FROM:

[REDACTED]
Clinical Psychologist
Office of Medical Services

SUBJECT: Additional Compensation for Overseas Personnel (ACOP)

1. On the basis of information obtained from OMS' completed and ongoing stress studies of Agency personnel who serve abroad in today's world, the undersigned recommends that the Director of Medical Services support your recommendation that the Director of Central Intelligence approve Additional Compensation for Overseas Personnel (ACOP).

2. ACOP represents an appropriate and effective signal to Agency employees that several major factors and conditions of field service are unusual and different from those of most other official Americans who are working abroad.

[REDACTED] Attempts are being made to relieve these stressors but these will take time. ACOP appears to be the most immediate way to recognize these unique stressors of overseas service for Agency personnel.

3. Overseas stressors have increased significantly in recent years as a result of new factors, e.g., hostile identification of Agency employees and political and governmental terrorism which can be directed against any employee and family member overseas. The ground rules have changed. Employees and their families are now more reluctant to serve overseas because they no longer enjoy a secure sense of adequate protection and equity as regards the substantial threats to their career and safety. ACOP constitutes a meaningful recognition signal and an appropriate incentive for valuable overseas services under conditions of increased stress. Monetary compensation effectively connotes to recipients and other that these increased dangers of overseas service are recognized and appreciated.

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3. More generally we have found that families are playing a greater role in employee feelings about overseas assignment. For years spouses have had a difficult role of supporting employees by performing a number of operational functions about which they know very little. Spouses are becoming less tolerant of this exclusion and want greater recognition. At the same time there is the increasing incidence of spouses having independent careers; it is a rare overseas assignment where one of the family's careers does not suffer.

4. In the past the glamour of living overseas, as well as significant financial benefits, helped employees deal with the above general problems as well as the more specific stresses of particular locations (such as the cultural problems women have in the Middle East). Conditions have now changed so that the major benefit we hear from employees about serving overseas is that it takes them away from the problems at Headquarters. However, the problems at Headquarters contribute to the stresses overseas insofar as officers in the field feel they are getting insufficient support from Headquarters.

5. Increasing the financial rewards of overseas service may reduce, but will not eliminate, the effects of the above stresses. Its more direct effect would be to signal a reversal of the perceived trend to downgrade overseas duty exemplified by the Congressional and Treasury pressures to reduce allowances and tax benefits.



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4. Agency precedents are available. One type recognizes and compensates overseas stress by various material benefits, e.g., CIARDS, Post Differential, COLA, R&R, etc. Another type recognizes and rewards meritorious service, e.g., promotion and advancement, QSI, medals, cash bonus, letters of commendation and appreciation, certificates of distinction, FR, etc. ACOP is within this Agency mainstream of compensating employees for their stressful and valuable services. In addition, ACOP uniquely combines the salutary factors of recognition and reward for every employee who serves full-time overseas today.

5. Implementation of ACOP is by means of a flat rate payment for each bi-weekly pay period that the employee actually serves overseas. This sustained positive reinforcement schedule has certain advantages which other methods lack, e.g., automatic and repeated delivery of a recognition and reward signal for each pay period served overseas.

6. In short, ACOP represents an additional incentive, an appropriate and immediate recognition, and an effective form of gratification for Agency employees whose overseas service involves coping carefully with the unique and increased stressors in today's world.

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